

# NOTES ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR FEBRUARY 28.

Hearers and Doers of the Word.  
(Matthew 7:21-29.)

Golden Text.—Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only. (James 1:22.)

Shortly after the healing of the man with the withered hand, Jesus chose the twelve disciples, whose names are recorded in each of the Synoptic Gospels.

Following immediately upon the selection of the Twelve came the Sermon on the Mount, the concluding portion of which is assigned for our study in the present lesson.

It seems best to identify the Sermon on the Mount with the so-called Sermon on the Plain, which is given by Luke (chapter 6:17-7:1). The horns of Hattin are usually identified with the Mount of Beatitudes, and the configuration of the landscape presents itself either as that of a mountain or a plain, according to the precise position of the observer.

The Sermon on the Mount.—As this lesson is the only one in our present course of study of the life of Jesus that refers to the Sermon on the Mount, it will be well, especially in the older classes of the Sunday-school, to take a comprehensive view of the whole discourse, dwelling especially on the portion assigned for our study which forms the application of the sermon.

The Sermon on the Mount was Jesus' platform of principles. We may regard it as his inaugural address, for he had just chosen his disciples, and this sermon was to instruct them in the new faith whose apostles they were to be.

While the Sermon on the Mount is the longest recorded discourse of Jesus, we must not make the mistake of thinking that it contains the whole of the Gospel which he came to declare. The Sermon on the Mount dwells especially on the practical side of the Christian life. Because an important doctrine like that of the Atonement, for example, is not fully set forth in this matchless discourse, we must not say that the Atonement is not a vital part of our Christian faith and doctrine. In order to a full-rounded conception of the Gospel we must take the whole of Jesus' life and teaching, both as recorded by the Evangelists and in the Epistles of the New Testament.

Entrance Into the Kingdom of Heaven.—Having set forth in the main portion of the Sermon on the Mount the chief characteristics of the kingdom of heaven, Jesus now set forth in the concluding portion the conditions of entrance into that kingdom.

It is not mere profession but real performance that will win admission into the kingdom of heaven. Not those who say, "Lord, Lord," but those who have both heard and done the sayings of Jesus will be the chosen ones to whom the gates of the kingdom shall open, and who shall hear the voice of the Master bidding them enter in.

The Two Houses.—Jesus closes his discourse with a vivid and striking parable which must have brought home to his hearers in most realistic fashion the relative position of those who are only hearers and those who are both hearers and doers of the Word.

The house founded upon a rock represents the condition of the man who both hears and does the will of the Master. He is founded upon the rock Christ Jesus, and the fiercest storms and the most raging flood cannot overthrow him.

The house built upon the sand represents the condition of the man who is resting upon an insincere profession. He cannot withstand the tempests of trial or adversity, and in the end he is swept away into utter destruction.

The Voice of Authority.—The closing verses of our lesson are significant, for we are there told that the people were astonished at his teaching, for Jesus taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes. The words of Jesus are those of final authority. Let us hear and heed them now and always.

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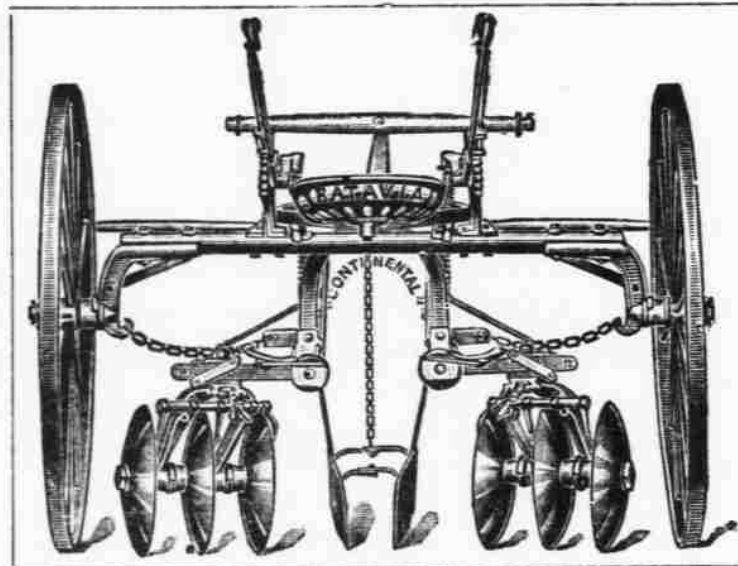
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